THE EYE:

BY OBADIAH OPTIC.

——VARIOUS OBJECTS FROM THE SENSE,
VARIOUSLY REPRESENTING. MILTON.

Vol. I.] THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 1808. [No. 22.

(continued from last number)

Pronaque cum spectant animalia cætera terram
Os homini sublime dedit: Cœlumque tueri
Jussit et erectos ad sidera tollere vultus. OVID.

Whilst other creatures prone bend to the earth,
Man views the heavens from which he had his birth.

OUR endeavour to excel in every virtuous accomplishment is assuredly a laudable ambition, thereby the powers of the mind are strengthened, a stimulus given to activity, an example afforded to others, and general utility promoted: If therefore any title of honour ought to be conferred, it should assuredly at all times be the reward of useful exertions, in advancing the public good; but when we consider how, and generally speaking, for what purposes, and to whom titles are and have been given, we can easily discern motives that do not yield pleasing reflections to those who are advocates for the dignity of human nature.

When the Author of our existence addresses his favourite prophet EZEKIEL, it is by the title of *son of man*, in the original, son of Adam, or son of the dust; by which, assuredly, the doctrine of humility was inculcated; and the author of our religion styles himself, for the same important reason, the SON OF MAN. How different the conduct of little mortals! who frame titles suitable to their arrogant minds, and strut through the world under the high sounding names of father in GOD, most eminent, his grace, most reverend, reverend, &c.

Until the time of CONSTANTINE, the title illustrious was never applied to any but such as had distinguished themselves highly, either in arms or letters; but after that period, those who were truly illustrious lost it, and it became hereditary in

the family of princes, who, as a great whole, were only *illustrious* for their cruelty and vices.

Considering man as a reasonable being; we must pause in astonishment at that avidity with which he grasps after these nominal distinctions, and much more so, at the difference with which a dignified HE is attended. Suppose a man in a laborious station of life, honest, sober, industrious, but extremely poor; who heeds him? who visits him? who wishes for an acquaintance with a daily labourer! The wheel of fortune turns round, the day labourer becomes an earl, possessed of eight or nine thousand pounds a year—see now how he is treated, tho' still the same man; observe how he is saluted—my lord! and your lordship! either must begin or end every sentence; his fame resounds to the skies for virtues he never had, and actions he never did. A great number of our citizens having derived their origin from European progenitors, it is absolutely necessary to expose these vain pretensions to titulary honour, and shew, that such distinctions are built on a sandy foundation; that true greatness knows them not, and virtue suffers them not to be enrolled in her catalogue.

The Orientals are still more infatuated by titles than even the Europeans; the simple governor of Schiras, after a long enumeration of pompous qualities, adds, the flower of courtesy, nutmeg of consolation, and rose of delight: And the emperor of China, among his other titles, is saluted, *son of Heaven*—Oh how vain! he of whom the world was not worthy, humbly calls himself the SON OF MAN, and a vain mortal is styled son of heaven! blush, blush man at thy vanity! Ask thyself, admitting that thou wert "stuck o'er with titles and hung round with strings," how long couldst thou say that thou wilt be able to preserve to thyself these sounding honours? dost thou answer, that thy life is not thine own, and therefore thou hast no security? If so, cast your titles, ye sons of pride, to the moles and to the bats, seek for honour that is more lasting; for titles that are permanent, and let pride cease to domineer.

As among the nations of the world we are young, we ought, by the failure of others in the path of happiness, to learn wisdom; nay, we have progressed in the science, and happily all titles among us are exploded; but it must be acknowledged by all, that as man is man in every clime, so like desires and like pursuits, with little variation, are found in every country; among us, assuredly men are, who sigh for titles, who long

to be hung round with strings: He who possesses $100,000, whose wife's dress at a ball is worth $2000, and her watch, decorated with diamonds, equals half that sum, can he be contented to *only* rank with *A.* and *B.* and *C.*? Pride is alarmed, Wealth presents her treasure, and a TITLE is only wanted to fix the family in the annals of great men—but this the wisdom of America has denied. If indeed man were to remain on this spot of the universe for ever, or if he were even sure to equal METHUSALAH in length of days, he might with some propriety, vainly joy in seeing these nominal honours grow thick upon him; but as he is the creature of a day, not sure of an hour, nay, even a minute—*O fie!*—blush thou silly mortal.—Titles have, under our happy constitution, been laid aside, because thereby would have been created vain distinctions; this our beloved WASHINGTON saw, and gave them his most decided disapprobation: At the end of the war he relinquished titles, to which, as the world went, he had an undisputed right, and considered himself honoured by the appellation of an AMERICAN CITIZEN.

Titles have a tendency to cause men to look down upon their fellows; Is it possible, that that star'd and gartered chief can treat the simple mechanic that walks yonder, as if he belonged to the same species? He may, it is true, possess talents, but he has no title; his virtues may have been conspicuous, but he has no title; he may have bled for his country, but he has no title—this degrades him, debases him and casts his actions into oblivion. The scripture says, GOD made of one blood all nations of men; but the titled chief denies it; he talks of the best blood of the country, the choice spirits, the mob, the swinish multitude, good and bad families, with a thousand vain distinctions, suited only to a corrupt taste.—Let us, my fellow citizens, be careful, let us always lift our voices against these nominal distinctions; let us be plain in our manners, sincere in our professions, honourable in our views, just in our actions, and prove ourselves thereby worthy of the alone title we esteem, *American citizens*.

OBADIAH OPTIC.

THE world has been shamefully imposed upon by many an important fool; but no man of sense ever took pains to *appear* great, as no honest man ever used any tricks to display his own integrity.

ORIGINAL.

THE SPECTACLES.—No. XIV.

'Tis these that early taint the female soul,
Instruct the eyes of young coquettes to roll,
Teach infant cheeks a bidden blush to know,
And little hearts to flutter at a beau. POPE.

THERE are fewer marriages in this large city than in many others of less extent in the United States; it is certain, that Philadelphia furnishes the most beautiful females, but not the most accomplished; and, from the observation of attentive spectators we may safely assert, that they are neither so affable and engaging in their manners as those in other cities. To what cause we can attribute this difference, is uncertain; but perhaps the inordinate love of amusement can partially account for it. Our ladies are not sufficiently attentive to literature, though there are some who do honour to their sex, yet generally, they care little for any thing but the means of adorning their persons and devising new modes of pleasure. In a female, the least spark of pride or vanity is disgusting, and it is almost impossible for one affected by these qualities to avoid being a prude or a coquette. The great excellence of a woman lies in her knowledge of the different branches of housewifery, and in whatever situation a lady supposes she is most agreeable to the gentlemen, she may be assured, that from the dairy a single glance will secure its object, when all the ogling from the side boxes would prove fruitless.

The following note was delivered by a lady with whose sweetness of disposition I am acquainted, and who shortly will discover the restraints of which she complains so far from being oppressive, are 'favours in disguise.'

MR. SPECS,

I HAVE now attained my seventeenth year, and am treated as a child scarcely free from leading strings; papa objects to my attending balls, and mama has such an aversion to the theatre, that it is with a great deal of coaxing I can prevail upon her permission to see a play once in a season. I am thought tolerably handsome, and the beaux pay some attention to me; but I am frequently told, with all the severity of parental disapprobation, that I am too young to pay any attention to the professions of those who admire me:—Do, my dear

sir, say something on this subject, and shew parents their tyranny in denying those privileges on which the happiness of the sex is founded. CAROLINE.

My fair correspondent will discover, by a little reflection, the impropriety of attending public balls; when ladies visit such places of amusement, they must associate themselves with partners of whose character they are ignorant, and form acquaintance with many whose society detracts from their respectability. This kind of amusement is now duly estimated, and will soon be erased from the list of fashionable pleasures. The snares spread for the affections of the fair, by the dissipated and worthless part of the opposite sex, and the promiscuous intercourse of females, will soon cause these pernicious assemblies to be entirely forsaken.

Miss CAROLINE should be extremely cautious how she trusts to the professions of those who are so forward to make them; a young lady should treat all gentlemen with civilty, but the greatest caution is requisite, lest too much attention from her is perceptible; vanity is inherent in our sex as well as theirs, and over the bottle, character is not much respected. I have known some gallants boast of having made conquests, when little more than common politeness was their tribute; and many are vain enough to convert a favourable smile into an irresistible attachment. A lady should know well the characters and habits of those whom she honours with her confidence, for a single error may be for ever incapable of remedy. It is difficult to advise upon so delicate a subject; but it is undoubtedly true, that those ladies are most respected, who associate with the fewest gentlemen. Many unhappy marriages proceed from the neglect of this caution; the advice of a father or brother weighs nothing against the false protestations of the flattering admirer; and a female consigns herself to a life of misery, because, from a number, she mistakes the most attentive for the most worthy. On the whole, I would lay down a few maxims for my charming correspondent.

Never be seen in public with a gentleman of whose character you are not fully informed.

However much you may esteem a gentleman, let the first symptoms of attachment proceed from him.

Avoid being seen in public places frequently. For a lady is never so much esteemed as when she has the reputation of being domestic. T.

SELECTED.

THE PROGRESS OF ARCHITECTURE.

BY THE REV. JAMES BANNISTER.

(concluded from page 247.)

AT length the Heraclydæ, eighty years after the destruction of Troy, return into Peloponnesus—a long and cruel war succeeds—the Pelopidæ are vanquished, and the Heraclydæ establish themselves in their ancient possessions; during this dreadful contest, learning, arts, and civility, seemed to breathe their last. The old inhabitants, unable to bear the tyranny of their new masters, emigrated in vast numbers, and establishing themselves on the coast of Asia Minor, built the cities of Smyrna, Halicarnassus, and Ephesus; here they had full leisure to cultivate the arts and sciences, which they did with such success, that they boast the honour of giving birth to Homer, the father of poetry, and Herodotus, the father of history. They likewise reduced architecture to rules, and invented the Doric and Ionic orders. The proportions are taken from the human body, and as the height of a man is six times the length of the foot, the height of the pillar was, at first, equal to six times its diameter: It was afterwards extended to seven times. This pillar was adorned with a capital, plain and simple, and denoted strength and solidity; from the inventors, who were of Doric origin, it derived its name. The Ionic pillar (invented by the Ionians of Asia Minor sometime afterwards) represents a virgin in the bloom of youth—its proportions are more delicate, its capital is more ornamented than the Doric, and its height is equal to eight diameters. The characteristics of this order are, chastity, neatness and elegance, and from the inventors it received its name. These improvements were soon conveyed from Asia Minor to Greece. That country, already taught to express her ideas of strength and elegance in her buildings, wanted only just notions of the magnificent, to render her knowledge of the art complete: This was happily accomplished by the invention of the Corinthian order, which from the height of the pillar, consisting of nine times its diameter, and the richness and variety of its ornaments, corresponded to every idea we could form of greatness.

We may reasonably suppose that the Greeks, possessed of these happy discoveries, and aided by their natural genius,

gave to architecture its last improvement; nor shall we find ourselves disappointed in our expectations. From the descent of Xerxes to the death of Alexander the Great, we see the elegant arts cultivated to that high degree as to leave succeeding ages only the humble task of imitating what they could never equal.

Athens, which was burnt by the army of Xerxes, rose from its ashes with splendour. The political talents of Themistocles, the justice and integrity of Aristides, the humanity of Cymon, the consummate prudence and admirable foresight of Pericles, who successively held the reins of government, all tended to one point (viz.) that of making their country glorious and their people happy. Enriched by the spoils of their vanquished enemies, and yet more by their extensive commerce—liberality, taste, and industry were universally diffused. Cymon, by his refined, elegant, and generous style of living, contributed no less to adorn the city by works of art than to improve the manners of its inhabitants. Pericles, by the number and magnificence of his public buildings, acquired the glorious appellation of second founder of Athens: The same grandeur and elevation of thought, chastised by the severest judgment, which animated his orations, appeared in his statues and temples.

In the temple of Jupiter Olympius we see form and colour given to the sublime conceptions of Homer in the statue of Jupiter, the work of the immortal Phidias. The foundations of this temple are said to have been laid by Pisistratus; but I imagine all that was built of it before the expedition of Xerxes, must have perished in the great conflagration which consumed the city—but the Athenians soon began to rebuild it, and adorned by the successive labours and ingenuity of many generations, when finished, it exhibited an object more glorious than any which Egypt or Babylon had ever seen in the days of their greatest prosperity or splendour—in magnitude nearly equal to some of their most celebrated edifices; in chastity of design, in justness of proportion, and in every thing that constitutes true beauty, far superiour. To describe the numerous porticos, temples, aqueducts, and the other monuments of ingenuity and taste, with which this city abounded, does not fall in with the design of my work; but the theatre is too extraordinary not to merit a particular account. It was built of costly marble, and so large, that it was capable of holding thirty thousand spectators; circular on one side, and

square on the other; round the whole were ranges of porticos, according to the number of stories, raised one above the other. This building was open at the top; the reason of which I conceive to be this: As the plays were acted in the day time, the light of the sun might in some measure be necessary for the actors; besides, it gave an air of probability to the drama, and made the representation appear like a real action, which was a principal object with all their tragedians. But nothing in the Greek theatre strikes us with that astonishment, as the echea, or brazen vessels, as Vitruvius calls them, which were placed under the seats of the spectators, and disposed by the most exact geometric and harmonic proportion, in such a manner as to reverberate the voice of the actor, and render the articulation more clear and harmonious; and such was the excellence of this contrivance, that a person placed in the farthest part of the theatre could hear distinctly every syllable of the play. How this was accomplished is not easy to conceive; certain I am, that it could not be effected without a more perfect knowledge, not only of architecture, but of various branches of the mathematics, than we at present possess; for few of the advocates for the moderns, will, I believe, have the vanity to assert, that any person of this age can communicate sound, clearly and distinctly, by an invention of that nature, thro' our smaller and less crowded theatres.

Let us now consider the comparative merits of the Egyptian and Grecian architecture. On viewing the former, we are struck with that idea of grandeur which rises from the magnitude of the object, and cannot help expressing our admiration and astonishment, when we consider the vast disproportion between the building and the builder! when we reflect on the limited powers of man, and behold the effects of united and continued labour. Their colossal statues, and the laborious and minute ornaments with which they overcharged their buildings, must likewise excite in us an admiration of their industry. But they were strangers to that beauty which proceeds from correctness of design, and a graceful and harmonious disposition of parts. They were likewise ignorant of what we consider as some of the first principles of architecture. I have already observed that they knew not how to turn an arch, neither were they happy in the disposition of their lights. Pillars, it is true, are to be seen in their buildings, but so much out of all proportion, that instead of a beauty, they may be considered as a defect—the ornaments of the capital, are labour-

ed, lifeless, and ununiform. Egypt, though the parent of almost every art, yet never carried one to its highest state of possible perfection. The fire of genius was extinguished by the rigid laws, and strict economy of their government; but in Greece the powers of the human mind had full liberty to expand themselves, and to that happy climate we owe that combination of judgment and feeling which constitutes true taste. This reigns in all their works of art, and whether we contemplate a building or a statue, we are struck with an idea of beauty, the effect of a just imitation of nature, or a conformity between the object before us, and the design of the artist; if, descending to particulars, we examine a single column, we shall find it perfect in all its parts; and that the length of the shaft, and the ornaments of its capital, are so formed as to convey ideas of strength, elegance, or grandeur, the characteristics of the three orders, and which include every modification of either utility or beauty.

From what has been said, I think I may venture to affirm, that architecture in Greece, during the time of Alexander the Great, had reached the highest perfection of which it was capable. That the Greeks were far superiour, in that art, to the Egyptians, Babylonians, and all the nations of antiquity; and that the excellence of the moderns consists in a happy imitation of those models of perfection which are left us by that polite and enlightened people.

THE FLORAL GAMES.

THESE were instituted in France in the year 1324, and filled the French poetry with allegorical images drawn from floral and botanical objects: and such as 'the flower of daisy,' &c. of Froissart.

They were founded by Clementina Isoure, countess of Toulouse, and annually celebrated in the month of May.

This lady published and edict, which assembled all the poets of France, to display their talents under the inspiring shade of artificial arbours, dressed with flowers; and he who produced the best poem, was rewarded with a violet of gold. There were also inferiour prizes of flowers made in silver. In the mean time, the conquerors were crowned with natural chaplets of their own respective flowers; each one, it seems, choosing his titulary flower, which acted as his guardian or inspiring saint in the sacred regions of Parnassus.

During the ceremony, degrees were also conferred. He who had won a prize three times, was created Docteur en gaye science; for so the poetry of the Provencal Troubadours was denominated.

The instrument of creation was in verse.

This strange institution, however fantastic, in a short time became common through the whole kingdom of France.

Poetical Department.

ORIGINAL.

THE GHOST.

A TERRIFIC TALE.

THE sun was descending beneath the green main,
And murk ev'ning gath'ring around;
Day's splendours no longer illumined the plain,
The clouds awe-inspiring foretold a great rain,
Loud thunders shook dreadful the ground:

When ALBERT look'd anxiously thro' the deep gloom,
Expecting some shelter to find,
Till morning her reign o'er the world should resume,
The dark aspect of nature with lustre illume,
And cheer with her glories his mind.

A darkness like midnight pervaded the air,
And fearfully raged the storm,
When the swift darting lightning cast a red glare
On the mould'ring walls of a castle, which near,
Presented its sheltering form.

The rude blasts howl'd mournfully thro' its old halls,
Thro' the windows the lightning gleam'd;
The thunders shook to their foundations the walls,
Around the old ruins were flitting the owls,
That midst the loud storm hoarsely scream'd.

The gate on its time-eaten hinges creak'd loud,
The noise was re-echo'd around;
Now on his mind rushed strange fancies a crowd:—
He 'd heard, a dread spectre wrap'd in a pale shroud,
In this place a residence found.

But quickly he enter'd, for rudely the storm
Beat fierce on his unshelter'd head,
When slow, from the earth, rose a horrible form!
The bosom of ALBERT was fill'd with alarm—
Of danger he still felt no dread.

The form was a female's, 'twas clothed in white,
A blood-stained dagger she bore!
On the place whence she rose appear'd a blue light,
That horribly blazed in the darkness of night,
And shew'd ev'ry feature so dread of the sprite,
Whose garment was stained with gore!

'O if you're permitted to speak to me, say—'
Thus ALBERT addressed the shade,
'Then tell me, O terrible vision, I pray,
What cause from the mouldering grave bids you stray,
Where you in the slumbers of death now should lay—
Why bear you that blood-stained blade?'

'For the crimes I've committed'—the spectre replied,
'I'm doom'd thus to rise from the earth;
No pleasures to me, while I lived, were denied;
But jealousy, self-love, and tyrannic pride
Attended my steps from my birth.

'I once was possess'd of this ancient domain,
By the dear youth I loved address'd;
I treated with harshness his love and his pain,
For I was coquettish, conceited and vain,
Tho' he my affections possess'd.

'Till, weary of pride, disappointment and scorn,
He gave to another his hand;
O then, what I felt—how neglected, forlorn,
My bright prospects blasted in life's youthful morn,
I cursed the riches to which I was born,
Whilst vengeance directed my hand.

'I hired a band of fierce ruffians, to lead
Him captive to me, with his bride;
Ah! vainly did she on her knees for him plead,
And offer herself as my victim to bleed—
A dagger I plunged in his side!

'O, deed most accursed! his eyes once so bright,
Now closed for ever in death!—

O'erpowered with anguish, dismay and affright,
His bride sunk beside him nor more saw the light,
And yielded to Heaven her breath!

'And now his pale spectre, disfigured with blood,
At the dread hour of midnight stalk'd 'round,
Before me, wherever I turned, it stood,
While fast from his side the red stream of life flow'd,
His finger would point at the wound!

'Each night did I see him forsake the cold clay,
And stalk to the spot where he died,
While a voice from his shade was heard thus to say—
'Thou too, my murd'ress, in th'earth soon shalt lay,
Where thou hast laid me and my bride!

'But never to rest, for no rest wilt thou find,
Till the graves shall all give up their dead!
My spectre avenging, each night shall appear!
Thy still sensate frame from the grave will I bear
To fiends like thyself in the cave of despair!
Each night shall the flames be thy bed!'

'The current of life would stand still at the sight,
With horror congeal'd in my veins;
My shrieks would disturb the deep silence of night,
I'd wait oft in terror till morn's welcome light
Relieved me from torturing pains.

'Unspeakable anguish corroded my breast,
Till death's icy hand laid me low:
Yet even my spirit remains still unbless'd,
Doom'd ever to wander, to taste of no rest,
And suffer continually woe!'

ANACHARSIS.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The observations of *E.* on the Editorial note prefixed to *Nothing* in the last number, are inadmissible, not from any belief that the Author's principles are incorrect or his intentions evil, quite the reverse, the Editor entertains no thoughts of the Author but such as are full of considerations of respect; yet he has reasons for not publishing that can only be explained to himself, should he therefore favour him with a visit, it will be esteemed as it ought.

Glormon's favour shall appear in our next.

A's Lines on the death of an indulgent mother, are too incorrect for publication.